UC-NRLF
B 3 321 716

LIBRARY
OF THE
UNIVERSITY
OF
CALIFORNIA

THE MIND OF WHITTIER

The Mind of Whittier

A STUDY OF WHITTIER'S FUNDAMENTAL RELIGIOUS IDEAS

BY

CHAUNCEY J. HAWKINS

MINISTER OF FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
SPENCER, MASSACHUSETTS

"No harm from Him can come to me
On ocean or on shore"

NEW YORK
THOMAS WHITTAKER
2 AND 3 BIBLE HOUSE

Copyright, 1904,
By Thomas Whittaker.

953.1
H39

TO

MY WIFE

M807996

CONTENTS

	PAGE
INTRODUCTION	1
THE INNER LIGHT	9
NATURE OF THE INNER LIGHT	28
JESUS CHRIST	38
OPTIMISM	52
RELIGION AND HUMANITY	62
NATURE	80
FUTURE LIFE	98

THE MIND OF WHITTIER

INTRODUCTION

POETRY is the common man's text book on religion. If we could analyze the religious consciousness of men, we might find that as many religious ideas come from the poets as from the Bible. More men get their conception of heaven from Dr. Watts than from St. John, and a crude conception of hell may be traced to Dante and Milton rather than to the New Testament. Whittier's thoughts in "Eternal Goodness" have been great forces in shaping our conception of the nature of God, and such poems as Lowell's "Vision of Sir Launfal" and Wordsworth's "Old Cumber-

land Beggar" have helped toward making man love his neighbor as himself. In Scotland the poetry of Burns stood against the pitiless doctrines of Calvinism, adding a freshness and charm to religion, while in an age of agnosticism in England Tennyson did as much to keep alive religious life as any preacher of his time.

Poetry has also been one of the greatest forces in binding the religious world together. Men will differ on creeds and catechisms, they will fight over dogmas, but through the words of the poet they will come together. The Protestant can use the hymn of the Catholic, the Orthodox the hymns of the Unitarian, and Calvinist and Arminian in song sit down together. When the religious world philosophizes it falls apart; when it worships through the words of the poet it is united. The poet goes beneath the form and symbol and expresses that which is eternal and unchanging.

Curtis says: "Not until we know why the rose is sweet, the dewdrop pure, or the rainbow beautiful, will we know why the poet is the best benefactor of society." The poet is an idealist; he is a spiritualist. No materialist was ever a great poet. The poet sees Infinite Thought in the "flower in the crannied wall," and he feels a "Presence which disturbs him with the joy of elevated thought." He does not analyze. When he begins to use the knife he loses his charm. He tells you what he sees with his spiritual vision and leaves his vision with the reader. He is the divinely ordained teacher who harmonizes the material and the spiritual; who furnishes the link between the seen and the unseen; who lifts the real into the realm of the ideal, and makes the ideal clearer by clothing it in the substance of the real. Hence the poet by necessity deals with religion or subjects closely akin to religion.

It is, therefore, always helpful to study religion through the poet. Especially is this true of our age, for the expression of religion today, as it was in the time of Jesus, is poetic. No greater contrast could be found in a single field of thought than the contrast between old and new treatises upon dogmatic theology. The older ones were hard, inflexible, and scholastic in style, while the best modern writers on the subject are easy, flowing, and poetic. Some of the sermons of the older divines read like books on logic, while such printed sermons as those by Phillips Brooks and Frederick Robertson are as delightful reading as the novels of Scott or the essays of Emerson.

The reason for this is obvious. Theology, today, is biblical. But the Bible is largely a book of poetry either in form or sentiment. The poetry of Job and of some of the Psalms is of the highest type, while the prophets and the four

evangelists have beautiful poetic touches on every page. Religion must always be poetical. Sometimes it will move with the dignified and solemn step of the epic, in moments of great joy it will burst out in the lyric, but from its nature it must always be closely united with harmony and rhythm. Thus there can be no better interpreter of the essential spirit of Christianity than the poet.

John W. Chadwick, in speaking of the religious influence of Bryant, Emerson, Longfellow, Lowell, Holmes, and Whittier, says that the influence of Whittier upon the religious world was greater than that of any of the others. Mary B. Chaflin wrote: "If the worth of a life may be estimated by the number of hearts comforted, the number of lives uplifted and inspired, Mr. Whittier's measure will exceed that of most men of this or any other century." Some one has said: "I would rather give a man or a woman on the verge of a great

moral lapse a marked copy of Whittier, than any other book in our language." It is undoubtedly true that he is quoted from the press and the pulpit more than any other American poet. Such a man must have a spiritual message that is fitted to comfort and inspire human hearts. It is the purpose of this book to interpret that message.

Whittier will probably never be studied as a great artist, but men will always be interested in the lofty spirituality of his thought. Tennyson was a consummate artist, and many will be interested in the form rather than the substance of his thought. On the other hand, Whittier's aim was always ethical. Indeed, much of his verse can scarcely be called poetry; especially is this true of his "Anti-Slavery Poems." The great poet-reformer sacrificed his place as a singer for a nobler cause. He wrote not for art's sake. There was only one motive behind all his work, and that was the desire to

lift his fallen brother and to right human wrongs. Some of these poems are little more than invitations to some important assembly of anti-slavery friends; some were composed and mailed almost before the ink was dry, that they might appear in print in time to call the attention of men to an important cause where prompt action was necessary; some are rhetoric on fire with emotion, having been written to kindle indignation or sympathy. In every case there was an immediate purpose before the writer. The cause was so great that he forgot his art.

In the following pages we have attempted to systematize the thoughts of this great reformer. We have not attempted to interpret, at length, Whittier's thought. His lines are so transparent that there is little need of interpretation. Neither is it our purpose to study Whittier as an artist. We have simply tried to gather into a condensed statement his spiritual message. That it

may minister to the lives of others as much as it has to his own is the author's earnest wish.

CHAUNCEY J. HAWKINS.

Spencer, Massachusetts.

THE INNER LIGHT

SITTING one day under a pine tree on the shore of Big Moose Lake in the Adirondacks, I was reading Whittier. Suddenly I was disturbed by an old man, who approached and asked what I was reading. "A little poem entitled 'Worship,' by Whittier," was my answer. "Ah! I wonder if thou hast found in these solitudes the Inner Light," he quickly replied. If we would understand the mind of our poet we must know something of this Inner Light.

Whittier was a Quaker and the Quakers are mystics. They stand opposed to rationalists. They deprecate all formal expression of religion, such as creed and ritual, and exalt the inner and spiritual side of the religious life. Whittier, in a letter to a friend, defines

the distinctive characteristic of Quakerism to be "the entire rejection of all ceremonial, the total disbelief in the power of pope, priest or elder to give a ransom for the soul of another." He says the time will come when "the world will become weary and disgusted with shams and shadows," and "Love will take the place of fast, penance, long prayers, and heathenish sacrifices; altar, church, priest, and ritual will pass away; but the human heart will be the Holy of Holies, where worship will still be performed, not in set forms, and on particular occasions, but daily and hourly, a worship meet and acceptable to Him who is not deceived by the pomp of outward ceremonial, and who loves mercy better than sacrifice." Not the divine life as expressed through form and institutions, but as expressed in human lives; the divine Spirit bearing witness in human souls, is the starting point of their faith.

It is with this simple faith that we must start in our interpretation of the mind of Whittier. In "First Day Thoughts" we have a picture of a Quaker Meeting-House. There "never hymn is sung, nor deep-toned organ blown, nor censer swung, nor dim light falling through the pictured pane." To this place Whittier goes, perchance to hear no human tongue, but:

"There, syllabled by silence, let me hear
The still small voice that reached the prophets ear;
Read in my heart a still diviner law
Than Israel's leader on his tables saw."

Constantly he was dwelling upon this thought of the "Immanence of the Holy Spirit." He used many words to express the thought,—"the still small voice," "the inward word," "the spirit of Christ," "the spirit of God," but everywhere he means the same thing, the divine Spirit in communion with the human soul. He makes no distinction between the spiritual presence of God,

of Christ, and of the Holy Spirit. They are only different expressions for the same eternal God.

In "Palestine" he recalls many familiar places and then writes:

"But wherefore this dream of the earthly abode,
Of Humanity clothed in the brightness of God?
Were my spirit but turned from the outward and dim,
I could gaze, even now, on the presence of Him!

Not in clouds and in terrors, but gentle as when,
In love and in meekness, He moved among men;
And the voice which breathed peace to the waves of the sea
In the hush of my spirit would whisper to me!

Oh, the outward hath gone! but in glory and power,
The spirit surviveth the things of an hour;
Unchanging, undecaying, its Pentecost flame
On the heart's secret altar is burning the same!"

His revolt against all form and ritual is expressed in "The Vision of Echard," written at his home at "Oak Knoll," in Danvers. Here is expressed his great faith in the power of the living Christ:

"Ye bow to ghastly symbols,
To cross and scourge and thorn;

Ye seek his Syrian manger
Who in the heart is born.

For the dead Christ, not the living,
Ye watch His empty grave,
Whose life alone within you
Has power to bless and save.

O blind ones, outward groping,
The idle quest forego ;
Who listens to His inward voice
Alone of Him shall know.

My Gerizim and Ebal
Are in each human soul,
The still, small voice of blessing,
And Sinai's thunder-roll.

The stern behest of duty,
The doom-book open thrown,
The heaven ye seek, the hell ye fear,
Are with yourselves alone."

One of the best illustrations we could find to make this truth of the Inner Light intelligible is the relation of the soul to the body. The life is immanent in every part of the physical frame. It is more than the body. It transcends the body, rules it, and shall continue when the body returns to dust. Yet the

soul does not rule over the body but in it. So God rules not over the world but in it; not over men but in them. He is more than the world. He transcends the material world and man, yet He is in all men and things.

This is not a new idea in Christian thought but is the oldest thought of the Christian Church. The foundation of the Greek theology was the doctrine of the immanence of God. Justin taught that God revealed himself to the heathen world as well as to the Jewish people, that He had done this not only through the glories of nature but through His Son, who is the divine reason in every human creature. Christ is the universal spirit, the divine reason, who not only dwells near men but is in all men, "whose abiding presence in the soul makes goodness possible." He is not confined to any place or time but is the Word in all races of men. There is a spiritual Christ who is independent of

space or time, who lived in all races before he was incarnated in the flesh. Hence there were Christians long before the birth of Jesus. Whosoever lived according to the truth, in whatever land, was Christian. There were Christians among the Greeks such as Socrates, Heraclitus, and kindred spirits; among the barbarians such as Abraham, Ananias, Azriah, and Elias. Some of these Christians, like Socrates, were martyrs for the truth. This teaching of the early church father was only an expression of St. John's words: "He was the light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world."

When we turn to Clement of Alexandria, who has been called the father of Greek theology, we find the same idea. Christ is the indwelling Deity, immanent in the world. He is in all nature and in all men; in Him humanity has its life. It is not a small portion of the race that is elected to this high privilege, but the

race itself "is unified and consecrated by the visible traces of divine revelation." This indwelling Christ is the instructor of men; since the creation of the race he has been superintending its education. "It was He who spoke through Moses and the Prophets, and it was He who spoke in Greek philosophy. In the progressive education of humanity He gave the sun and moon to be worshipped, in order that men might not be atheistical; in order, also, that they might rise through the lower worship to something higher. He is not the teacher of a few only, in some favored time or place, but He comes to all, in all times and everywhere." Because he believed Christ to be in all men and the teacher of all, Clement did not make any distinction between natural and revealed religion. Christ was the inspiration of the Hebrew prophets but also of the Greek philosophers. Whatever was true and well said was from the source of all reason, no

difference who said it or where his home. This thought of the immanence of Christ characterized the theology of the early church down to the time of Augustine. Origen learned it from the school of Clement, and Athanasius made it the corner stone of his theology, with which he met and overcame the philosophies of paganism. The same idea of the immanence of the Inner Light breathes through all the religious poetry of Whittier.

"Nor bounds, nor clime, nor creed thou knowest,
Wide as our need Thy favors fall;
The white wings of the Holy Ghost
Stoop, seen or unseen, o'er the heads of all."

God is the "Logos of the Greek and Jew, the old sphere-music which the Simian heard, truth which the sage and prophets saw." He is with all "souls that struggle and aspire." If God leaves us it is only because we turn from Him. Truly the All-Father has not forgotten any of his children! He works through the religious consciousness of the race,

never compelling men but leading them as fast as they will follow. No religion is godless. None of them are frauds. They are good mixed with evil, truth with error. They are all steps in the evolution of the religious life of humanity.

Because of this ever-present spirit of God in worship, man does not need the soulless breath of the organ, nor the candle-lit altar, nor ornate rhetoric-play, nor cold philosophy, nor the loud-asserting dogmatist in the pulpit.

"I know how well the fathers taught,
What work the later schoolmen wrought;
I reverence old-time faith and men,
But God is near us now as then;
His force of love is still unspent,
His hate of sin is imminent."

The Inner Light is the strength of the discouraged and despairing soul.

"Dream not, O Soul, that easy is the task
Thus set before thee. If it proves at length,
As well it may, beyond thy natural strength,
Faint not, despair not. As a child may ask

A father, pray the Everlasting Good
For light and guidance midst the subtle snares
Of sin thick planted in life's thorough-fares,
For spiritual strength and moral hardihood ;
Still listening, through the noise of time and sense,
To the still whisper of the Inward Word ;
Bitter in blame, sweet in approval heard,
Itself its own confirming evidence :
To health of soul a voice to cheer and please,
To guilt the wrath of the Eumenides."

It was Whittier's conception of the immanence of God in the human soul which gave stability to his faith in times of religious change. The passing of old and established dogmas has always been a source of skepticism. Whenever the breaking up period comes in a theological system, many men lose their faith, while others are disturbed for fear religion will cease to exert any power over the consciences of men. We are in such a period. Some dogmas are passing away and many others are being seriously questioned. The Bible has been subjected to criticism until our traditional the-

ories of inspiration are already shaken. The theory of the atonement which was the effective instrument in the hands of the preachers of the last century, and which was so fruitful of great revivals, is never heard today in large numbers of our pulpits, while in others it is presented in greatly modified form. These changes are the source of anxiety on the part of many sincere souls, who sometimes feel that nothing awaits us except darkness and spiritual chaos. But Whittier saw in all this struggle something much better and in the noisy cry "Great Pan is dead!" he heard only the wail of error. To him religious unrest was nothing more than the disturbance of the waters, caused by the angel sent from God. The sands must drift; the rocks alone will remain. The storm clouds will pass and as the mists disappear the permanent stars will be left behind. The Inner Light can never fail; creeds may be outgrown, the legends and myths of

childhood may die, but God will never fail, and His testimony will never pass from the human heart.

"Therefore I trust, although the outward sense
Both true and false seems shaken; I will hold
With newer light my reverence of the old
And calmly wait the births of Providence.
No gain is lost; the clear-eyed saints look down
Untroubled on the wreck of schemes and creeds;
Love yet remains, its rosary of good deeds
Counting in task-field and o'erpeopled town.
Truth has charmed life; the Inward Word survives,
And, day by day, its revelation brings;
Faith, hope, and charity, whatsoever things
Which cannot be shaken, stand. Still holy lives
Reveal the Christ of whom the letter told,
And the new gospel verifies the old."

What if "old faiths, long outworn" be thrown away and altars overturned,

"Have ye not still my witness
Within yourselves always?"

Whittier held to the idea of the Inner Light not only in theory but also in practice. Once give him the conviction that he was being led by it and nothing

could turn him aside. When once he decided to do a thing and was convinced that the spirit was leading him, nothing could turn him from it. To him

> " The one unpardonable sin
> Is to deny the Word of God within."

The ultimate authority in religion is the experience of God in the human soul. This is the conclusion of the poem on "Questions of Life." Whittier raised some of the old questions that have always been wrapped in mystery. Whence came I? Whither do I go? What place has man in this vast universe? Is he a part of this universal life, which mounts the sap from forest roots and makes green the native dells, which gives life blood to the new-born leaves and breathes in the wild bird's song? Or is man imprisoned in a separate consciousness? The Sphinx does not solve the question which she propounds. The vaulted mystery throws

back in echo the question she receives. If we turn to nature she mocks us in our eager search. If we ask the prophets of the Orient or consult the rolls buried in the painted tombs and pyramids of Egypt, still the mysteries are bolted. Dust hath no answer from the dust. We know what of life and death the demon taught to Socrates, what the solemn-thoughted Plato said, we read the scroll of Hebrew seer and bard, yet the truth is never known. We seek from all these outward sources for an answer but it is never found. We seek the clue to find with groping fingers of the blind. Is there then no answer? Yes, in the inner silence of the heart.

" To Him, from wandering long and wild,
I come, an over-wearied child,
In cool and shade His peace to find,
Like dew-fall settling on my mind.
Assured that all I know is best,
And humbly trusting for the rest,
I turn from Fancy's cloud built scheme,
Dark creed, and mournful eastern dream

Of power, impersonal and cold,
Controlling all, itself controlled,
Maker and slave of iron laws,
Alike the subject and the cause;
From vain philosophies, that try
The sevenfold gates of mystery,
And, baffled ever, babble still,
Word-prodigal of fate and will;
From Nature, and her mockery, Art,
And book and speech of men apart,
To the still witness in my heart;
With reverence waiting to behold
His Avatár of love untold,
The Eternal Beauty new and old."

We must not conclude from this language of mysticism that Whittier was an impractical dreamer. We shall fail to understand his message if we think that he sat in meditation, passively waiting for the spirit of God to come into his heart and make all truth plain. He had nothing of that oriental spirit which waits in aimless silence, trying to lose itself in the limitless ocean of spirit. The Inner Light reveals truth only to the active soul. Man finds truth only in love and service.

"Not to ease and aimless quiet
Doth that inward answer tend,
But to works of love and duty
As our being's end;

Not to idle dreams and trances,
Length of face and solemn tone,
But to Faith, in daily striving
And performance shown."

Whittier's idea of the Bible must be understood in connection with his thought of the Inner Light. No poet has known his Bible better, or been more influenced by it. As Steadman has said: "The Bible was rarely absent from his verse, and its spirit, never." When he was a boy he was able to tell the Bible story, from Genesis to Revelation, and could quote the greater part of it. His words in "Miriam" indicate how much he valued the Sacred Book:

"We search the world for truth; we cull
The good, the pure, the beautiful,
From graven stone and written scroll,
From all old flower-fields of the soul;

And weary seekers of the best,
We come back ladened from our quest,
To find that all the sages said
Is in the Book our mothers read."

But while Whittier valued the Scriptures so much, they were not for him "the rule of faith and practice." That was "none other than the living, omnipresent spirit of God." The Scriptures were subordinate and secondary to this indwelling Spirit. Indeed the Scriptures can be understood only as they are interpreted by the divine Spirit.

"Only when on form and word obscure
Falls from above the white supernal light
We read the mystic characters aright,
And life informs the silent portraiture,
Until we pause at last, awe-held, before
The One ineffable Face, love, wonder, and adore."

He believed in the Scriptures because "we find in them the eternal precepts of the divine spirit, declared and repeated, to which our consciences bear witness. They testify of Christ within. We believe in the Scriptures because they

believe in us, because they repeat the warnings and admonitions and promises of the indwelling Light and Truth, because we find the law and prophets in our souls." Thus Whittier writes:

> "I pray for faith, I long to trust;
> I listen with my heart, and hear
> A voice without a sound: 'Be just,
> Be true, be merciful, revere
> The Word within thee: God is near!'"

NATURE OF THE INNER LIGHT

THE nature of the Inner Light is essential goodness. In the earlier part of his life, Whittier was surrounded by a Calvinistic conception of God, and he rebelled against it. We find this thought expressed in the "Minister's Daughter." He tells of a minister who in his morning sermon spoke of the fall, of how henceforth the wrath of God rested on every soul, and of how all were doomed to eternal loss save a chosen few. In the afternoon he went for a walk with his daughter. It was in the springtime, when the apple trees were in blossom and the meadows were fresh and green. On all this glory the minister looked, and then he said to his daughter:

"How good is the Lord who gives us
These gifts from His hands, my child!"

The child replied:

"O father! these pretty blossoms
Are very wicked, I think.

Had there been no garden of Eden
There never had been a fall;
And if never a tree had blossomed
God would have loved us all."

The minister rebukes his child:

"By His decree man fell:"

therefore whether to us comes

"Joy or pain, or light or shadow,
We must fear and love Him still."

"O, I fear Him," said the daughter,
"And I try to love Him too;
But I wish He was good and gentle,
Kind and loving as you."

From these words of his little daughter and from the beauty of nature, the minister learned the lesson of love, and after this

"The dread Ineffable Glory
Was infinite Goodness alone."

In "Revelation" he sums up his thought of the character of God:

"No picture to my aid I call,
I shape no image in my prayers;
I only know in Him is all
Of life, light, beauty, everywhere,
Eternal Goodness here and there."

To be able to believe in the goodness of God in the presence of so much suffering is not an easy task for faith. There are few writers who have been free from the spirit of pessimism. Tennyson could not carry forward the optimism of "Locksley Hall."

"Lost the cry of 'Forward, Forward,' lost within a growing gloom;
Lost, or only heard in silence from the silence of the tomb.
'Forward' sang the voices then, and of the many mine was one,
Let us hush this cry of 'Forward' till ten thousand years have gone."

The attempt to harmonize the facts of evil and of human suffering with the goodness and love of God has been one of the greatest problems of Christian

thought. But the optimistic faith of Whittier had no difficulty in harmonizing the two thoughts. He saw the wrong that existed about him, he heard the groan and travail-cries,

"Yet, in the maddening maze of things,
And tossed by storm and flood,
To one fixed trust my spirit clings
I know that God is good!

And so beside the Silent Sea
I wait the muffled oar:
No harm from Him can come to me
On ocean or on shore.

I know not where His islands lift
Their fronded palms in air;
I only know I cannot drift
Beyond His love and care."

He had great faith in the ultimate triumph of goodness. He said: "Surely God would not permit His children to suffer if it were not to work out for them the highest good. For God never does, nor suffers to be done, but that which we would do if we could see the end of all events as well as He. God's love is

so infinitely greater than mine that I cannot fear for His children, and when I long to help some poor, suffering, erring fellow-creature, I am consoled with the thought that His great heart of love is more than mine can be, and so I rest in peace."

In "Revelation" he wrote:

"I know He is, and what He is,
Whose one great purpose is the good
Of all. I rest my soul on His
Immortal Love and Fatherhood;
And trust Him as His children should.

I fear no more. The clouded face
Of nature smiles; through all her things
Of time and space and sense I trace
The moving of the Spirit's wings,
And hear the song of hope she sings."

We are not to suppose that Whittier never had a doubt concerning the great problems of religion. He is constantly raising questions which he confesses his inability to solve.

"The same old baffling questions!
O my friend, I cannot answer them."

Few men have ever wrestled in spirit more than did this deeply religious soul. He spent one entire winter discussing, with his near friends about the fire at his home in Danvers, the question of immortality. Those who entered into these discussions tell us of the struggles through which he passed. But while great doubts troubled his mind he was by nature intensely religious and his religious feelings always gained the ascendency. Hence, confessing his inability to solve the problems which disturbed him, he would turn from them with childlike trust to the faith learned at his mother's knees.

> "'All is of God that is, and is to be;
> And God is good.' Let this suffice us still,
> Resting in childlike trust upon His will
> Who moves to His great ends unthwarted by the ill!"

Augustine raised the old question of the origin of evil. "What is evil, and whence comes it, since God the Good

hath created all things? Why made He anything at all of evil, and not rather by His Almightiness caused it not to be?" This question Whittier is compelled to confront but he cannot find an answer. "From sea and earth comes no reply." All we know is that from age to age descends the sad bequest from sire to son. Through everything this dark thread runs. Reason cannot solve the question. Faith alone can surmount the difficulty.

"Oh, why and whither? God knows all;
I only know that He is good
And that whatever may befall
Or here or there, must be the best that could.

For He is merciful as just;
And so, by faith correcting sight,
I bow before His will, and trust
Howe'er they seem He doeth all things right.

And dare to hope that He will make
The rugged smooth, the doubtful plain;
His mercy never quite forsake;
His healing visit every realm of pain;

That suffering is not His revenge
Upon His creatures weak and frail,

Sent on a pathway new and strange
With feet that wander and with eyes that fail;

That o'er the crucible of pain,
Watches the tender eye of Love,
The slow transmitting of the chain
Whose links are iron below to gold above!"

The best explanation he could find of the ways of Providence was in the training and discipline which he received from his mother. When a boy he could not understand why his mother's hand should restrain him in his selfish moods. He complained bitterly of her chastenings. But when he grew wiser and looked across the years he saw that his childhood's needs were best known by his mother, and that all her chastening was with the hand of love. This interpreted for him the greater Providence.

"I wait, in His good time to see
That as my mother dealt with me
So with His children dealeth He.

I bow myself beneath His hand:
That pain itself was wisely planned
I feel, and partly understand."

The nature of this Inner Light is learned from the testimony of human character. The divine nature can be known only through human nature, and must be expressed in terms of the human.

"The riddle of the world is understood
Only by him who feels that God is good,
As only he can feel who makes his love
The ladder of his faith, and climbs above
On th' rounds of his best instincts; draws no line
Between mere human goodness and divine,
But, judging God by what in him is best,
With a child's trust leans on a Father's breast."

He depended, not on historical revelation, nor theology, nor creed, for a proof of the divine Being. He knew God in his experience and found the divine nature to be like the best in his own nature. The minister in "The Minister's Daughter" found the true character of God not in creed nor book; following these he had erred. It was through the words of his daughter, "But I wish he was good and gentle, kind and loving as

you " that he learned the nature of God. Whittier tried to solve the mystery of the divine nature as manifested in the Trinity but his study of Aquinas or Calvin or Hippo's saint brought no light to him. Discouraged in his search he says:

" I shut my grave Aquinas fast ;
The monkish gloss of ages past,
The schoolman's creed aside I cast,

And *my heart* answered, " Lord I see
How Three are One, and One is Three ;
The riddle hath been read to me ! "

In " The Friend's Burial " he says:

" The dear Lord's best interpreters
Are humble human souls ;
The Gospel of a life like hers
Is more than books or scrolls.

From scheme and creed the light goes out,
The saintly fact survives ;
The blessed Master none can doubt
Revealed in Holy lives."

JESUS CHRIST

WHITTIER always maintained that he was an orthodox Quaker. In 1834 he wrote to a friend concerning the Hicksites, making a strong confession of his orthodoxy. "What will it avail us if while boasting of our soundness and of our enmity to the delusion of Hicksism, we neglect to make a practical application of our belief to ourselves? I do not claim to be any better for my orthodox principles." Hicksism was the unitarian movement among the Quakers and here Whittier positively declares that he is not a follower of the Hicksites but is orthodox. Later in life he wrote to John Bright: "Some of us are still Friends of the Fox and Penn and Barclay school." In his last will he used words and made requests which imply

that he was an orthodox Quaker. In writing to Gail Hamilton about her book, "What Think Ye of Christ?" he said: "My own mind had, from the same evidence which thee aduce, become convinced of the Divinity of Christ, but I cannot look upon Him as other than a man like ourselves, through whom the divine was made miraculously manifest. Jesus of Nazareth was a man, the Christ was a God,—a new revelation of the Eternal in time." He was the supreme manifestation of God in our humanity and in time. He is "Humanity clothed in the brightness of God." It is in Him that we see the essential character of God:

> "We know in thee the fatherhood
> And heart of God revealed."

To another friend he wrote: "My ground of hope for myself and for humanity is that divine fulness of love which was manifested in the life, teachings, and self-sacrifice of Christ." Again he wrote:

"God is One; just, holy, merciful, eternal, and almighty, Creator, Father of all things; Christ, the same eternal One, manifested in our Humanity and in Time; and the Holy Spirit, the same Christ, manifested within us, the Divine Teacher, the Living Word, the Light that lighteth every man that comes into the world." In the light of these words we can better understand his verse:

> "The homage that we render Thee
> Is still our Father's own;
> No jealous claim or rivalry
> Divides the cross and Throne."

Christ is:

> "Most Human and yet most divine,
> The flower of man and God."

Certainly no words could give a more dignified place to Christ than these taken from "The Crucifixion:"

> "Well may the cavern-depths of Earth
> Be shaken, and her mountains nod;
> Well may the sheeted dead come forth
> To see the suffering son of God!

Well may the temple-shrine grow dim,
And shadows veil the Cherubim,
When He, the chosen one of heaven,
A sacrifice for guilt is given!"

Some of the names which Whittier applied to Christ give a key to the interpretation of his thought. He calls Him "Christ of God, the Holy One," "Suffering Son of God," "The Lowly and Just," "Humanity clothed in the brightness of God," "Loved of the Father," "When the Holy One the garments of the flesh put on," "Christ, the Rock of Ages," "Elder Brother," "The World's Overcomer," "Immortal Love," "Light Divine," and "Healer." From these titles, which Whittier is constantly applying to Christ, we may gather this poet's conception of the nature and work of the heavenly Master.

Whittier never tires of emphasizing the presence and immanence of Christ in the lives of all men. The Christ of history is gone. He shall return no more in

the flesh. In vain through the centuries have men looked for His return upon the clouds of glory. "The world's long hope is dim." The Christ of the system maker has fallen again and again. The letter fails and every symbol wanes but

> "The Spirit over-brooding all,
> Eternal Love remains.
>
> In joy of inward peace, or sense
> Of sorrow over sin,
> He is His own best evidence,
> His witness is within.
>
> No fable old, nor mythic lore,
> Nor dream of bards and seers,
> No dead fact stranded on the shore
> Of the oblivious years;—
>
> But warm, sweet, tender, even yet
> A present help is He;
> And faith has still its Olivet,
> And love its Galilee."

The presence of Christ in our humanity is also taught in "The Meeting:"

> "That the dear Christ dwells not afar,
> The king of some remoter star,
> Listening, at times, with flattered ear
> To homage wrung from selfish fear,

But here, amidst the poor and blind,
The bound and suffering of our kind,
In works we do, in prayers we pray,
Life of our Life, He lives today."

Christ is such an One that still men may commune with Him :

" Yet, Loved of the Father, Thy Spirit is near
To the meek, and the lowly, and penitent here ;
And the voice of Thy love is the same even now
As at Bethany's tomb or on Olivet's brow."

The great example for human conduct is Jesus of Nazareth. When we follow " Him whose holy work was doing good," then the wide earth will become our Father's temple and each life will be a " psalm of gratitude."

" Then shall all shackles fall ; the stormy clangor
Of wild war music o'er the earth shall cease ;
Love shall tread out the baleful fire of anger,
And in its ashes plant the tree of peace ! "

Not only is Christ the example for human conduct ; He is the ultimate standard by which we must test our lives. As there are a few great pictures by which we approve or condemn all other

works of the painter's brush, a few great poems by which the worth of all poetry is judged, so Christ is the divine ideal by which all lives must be measured:

> "Thou judgest us; Thy purity
> Doth all our lusts condemn;
> The love that draws us nearer Thee
> Is hot with wrath to them.
>
> Our thoughts lie open to Thy sight;
> And, naked to Thy glance,
> Our secret sins are in the light
> Of Thy pure countenance."

Constantly Whittier was dwelling upon the thought that Christ was the Saviour and Healer of men and nations. It is only the Christ who can save men from superstitions of the world. Whittier looks over the nations of the earth and sees man kneeling and trembling by his altars of stone, trying to appease his God by the sprinkling of blood. Such worship is only the "faithlessness of fear." It rises from a picture which man paints of a God of torment.

"Fade, pomp of dreadful imagery
Wherewith mankind have deified
Their hate, and selfishness, and pride!
Let the scared dreamer wake to see
The Christ of Nazareth at his side!"

When this worship inspired by fear shall disappear, then shall come the true worship. Humanity shall learn to look to Christ, the beautiful and good;

"It yet shall touch His garment's fold,
And feel the heavenly Alchemist
Transform its very dust to gold."

Humanity can never reach its best apart from Christ. Only as this heavenly Vine strikes its roots deep into our earthly sod can we ever expect to bring forth the full fruit of our humanity. He is Love ineffable, the fountain of love and life.

"No pride of self Thy service hath,
No place for me and mine;
Our human strength is weakness, death
Our life, apart from Thine.

Apart from Thee all gain is loss,
All labor vainly done;

The solemn shadow of Thy cross
Is better than the sun.

Alone, O Love ineffable!
Thy saving name is given;
To turn aside from Thee is hell,
To walk with Thee is heaven!"

Christ is still the healer of humanity's ills:

"For lo! in human hearts unseen
The Healer dwelleth still,
And they who make His temples clean
The best subserve His will."

A woman "dwarfed and wronged and stained with ill," he bids rise in the name of Christ and reclaim her lost soul.

"In His name,
Rise up, and break thy bonds of shame.
Art weak? He's strong. Art fearful? Hear
The world's O'ercomer: 'Be of cheer!'
What lip shall judge when He approves?
Who dare to scorn the child He loves?"

Whittier found no satisfaction in the orthodox views of the atonement. God is not an eternal judge characterized only by a sense of justice, who demands of sinful humanity a full reparation for its

disobedience, but He is the good Father who does all that can be done to lead His erring children to a better life.

"Ye praise His justice; even such
His pitying love I deem:
Ye seek a king; I fain would touch
The robe that hath no seam.

Ye see the curse that overbroods
A world of pain and loss;
I hear our Lord's beatitudes
And prayer upon the cross."

For the purpose of raising men to higher life Jesus Christ came into human flesh, and is the true redeemer of mankind. While Whittier could not have subscribed to the so-called New England doctrine of the atonement, he could have subscribed to the seventh chapter of Romans. What Paul told here in the language of experience, Whittier in the following lines told in the words of a poet:

"Thou, O Elder Brother! who
In Thy flesh our trial knew,
Thou, who hast been touched by these
Our most sad infirmities,

> Thou alone the gulf canst span
> In the dual heart of man,
> And between the soul and sense
> Reconcile all difference,
> Change the dream of me and mine
> For the truth of Thee and Thine,
> And, through chaos, doubt, and strife,
> Interfuse Thy calm of life.

God is not to be reconciled with man but man is to be reconciled with himself and the will of his Creator, the will of his Creator being the very laws of man's individual and social constitution. Hence the redemptive forces must work within man rather than externally upon him. They must be forces which make possible the triumph of the spiritual over the animal nature, love over selfishness, temperance over unregulated appetite and passion, truth over ignorance, virtue over vice. Christ in us is the hope of glory. The victorious Christ in the wilderness of temptation, the merciful Christ in Galilee, the suffering Christ on the cross, have redemptive value just to the extent that they become forces

working within our lives, and enable us to live like Christ.

It is not a Christ who can satisfy God because we have violated a law external to our natures that we want, but a Christ who can help us to overcome sin which is waging a battle in our hearts. Every life is a battle ground between the animal and the spiritual, between selfishness, and pride, and vanity on the one hand, and on the other, those virtues which belong to a son of God. The penalty cannot be taken away unless the causes of the conflict are removed. What we want is a Christ who will give us more life, more strength to attain virtue, wisdom, purity, love; a Christ who will be a resident force in our lives, driving out sensuality, pride, selfishness, and passion, and filling us with life and life in its abundance. It is of such a Christ that Whittier constantly sings.

Phillips Brooks gave this definition of salvation: "Its one idea is health. Not

rescue from suffering, not plucking out of the fire, not deportation to some strange, beautiful region where the winds blow with other influences and the skies drop with other dews, but health,—the cool, calm vigor of the normal human life; the making of the man to be himself; the calling up out of the depth of his being and the filling with vitality of that self which is truly he,—this is salvation. The Christian is nothing but the true man. Human courage, human patience, human trustiness, human humility,—these filled with the fire of God make the graces of the Christian life. The Christian graces are nothing but the natural virtues held up into the light of Christ." How much Brooks was influenced by the thought of Whittier, we shall probably never know. But this is certainly true, that it would be difficult to give a better description of Whittier's conception of salvation than in these words of Phillips Brooks.

Whittier writes:

"That to be saved is only this,—
Salvation from our selfishness,
From more than elemental fire,
The soul's unsanctified desire,
From sin itself, and not the pain
That warns us of its chafing chain."

Christ, alone, is the great source of strength for men and the Saviour from sin.

"The healing of His seamless dress
Is by our beds of pain;
We touch Him in life's throng and press,
And we are whole again."

OPTIMISM

NOTHING deadens action like unbelief. Once convince men that their course of action is hopeless and inactivity will follow. The spirit which gives utterance to the words, "It is useless to try," is the greatest enemy which any reformer has to meet. It was man's unbelief in his power to free the slave that retarded the cause of emancipation. But this despair never possessed Whittier. Not only was he sincere; he was also cheerful. When others despaired of the triumph of right, he sang as though the dawn of the morning was at hand. He could not be a pessimist because he believed in man, in the right, and in God.

He was quick to see the insincerity of society. After a visit to Washington,

he described the social life at the nation's capitol. He imagines the dance:

> "There tonight shall woman's glances,
> Star-like, welcome give to them;
> Fawning fools with shy advances
> Seek to touch their garment's hem,
> With the tongue of flattery glozing deeds
> Which God and Truth condemn."

What is it to these people of wealth and fashion that the stars look down upon a scene of human misery that earth would fain hide! "That the slave ship lies in waiting, rocking on Potomac's side!" Vainly shall the slave in anguish call, vainly shall the mourner go to these children of fashion!

Here would the pessimist stop and weight the wind with his wailing. But Whittier saw deeper. Underneath the insincerity of men and the fickleness of society, he saw something which filled him with hope. Mankind at heart is real and once its heart is touched by a great cause it will give its warm blood for the right.

"Nay, my words are all too sweeping:
In this crowded human mart,
Feeling is not dead, but sleeping;
Man's strong will and woman's heart
In the coming strife for freedom, yet shall
bear their generous part."

It was because of this belief in man that he wrote many of his Anti-slavery poems. He wrote to awaken these feelings, "not dead but sleeping," and to make "man's strong will" bear its part.

He was strong, at times, almost bitter in his criticism of the Christian Church. He did not hesitate to call the Church, as he saw it in many places, a Christless Church. Yet he was not pessimistic about the future of this Christian institution. In the closing paragraph of a poem in which all his indignation bursts forth, he says:

"O heart of mine, keep patient! Looking forth,
As from the Mount of Vision, I behold,
Pure, just, and free, the Church of Christ on earth;
The martyr's dream, the golden age foretold."

Not only was he an optimist because

he believed that mankind would ultimately stand for the right; he believed that God was on the side of the right and that wrong could not prevail. When Texas was annexed to this country, as Whittier believed, to strengthen the cause of slavery, he appealed to Massachusetts to stand firm in its protest, though forsaken by all save truth.

> "Shrink not from the strife unequal!
> With the best is always hope;
> And ever in the sequel
> God holds the right side up."

John C. Calhoun strongly urged the annexation of Texas so that slave territory might be increased, but opposed the annexation of Oregon for fear that it would enlarge the domain of freedom. To him the Quaker poet writes: "The fates are just; they give us but our own; Nemesis ripens what our hands have sown."

> "So, Carolinian, it may prove with thee,
> For God still overrules man's schemes and takes

Craftiness in its self-set snare, and makes
The wrath of man to praise Him."

Let man never despair who is in the battle for the right. He cannot meet with ultimate defeat for all the powers of nature and God are fighting on his side.

"Not to the swift nor to the strong
The battles of the right belong;
For he who strikes for Freedom wears
The armor of the captive's prayers,
And nature proffers to his cause
The strength of her eternal laws;
While he whose arm essays to bind
And herd with common brutes his kind
Strives moreover at fearful odds
With Nature and the jealous gods,
And dares the dread recoil which late
Or soon their right shall vindicate."

A fugitive slave, Thomas Sims, was arrested and returned to bondage. The wealthiest and most respectable citizens of Boston volunteered their services to the marshal on this occasion. All the forces of mammon, respectability, and authority were arrayed against the cause

of freedom. But this could not make a pessimist of Whittier.

"Chain Hall and Pulpit, Court and Press,
Make gods of gold;
Let honor, truth, and manliness
Like wares be sold.

Your hoards are great, your walls are strong,
But God is just;
The guilded chambers built by wrong
Invite the rust."

"Truth is stronger than a lie,
And righteousness than wrong."

On a June day when the sun shines brightly and the air is filled with new life, a strong body and perfect health will make an optimist of any man. When the night comes and the earth is chilled by disappointment and shaken by defeat, only a believer in God can be an optimist. M. Laveleye truly remarks that "an incurable sadness takes hold of the man who has no hope of anything better than this life." The optimist may be conscious of pain and know the inequalities and struggles which are a part

of the human lot, but these things will not discourage him because he believes that a perfect Mind, a righteous Reasonableness, rules in the mystery and night of humanity.

"God's ways seem dark, but, soon or late,
They touch the shining hills of day;
The evil cannot brook delay,
The good can well afford to wait.
Give ermined knaves their hour of crime;
Ye have the future grand and great,
The safe appeal of Truth to Time."

When the awful war cloud hung over our country, when cities were being burned and the brave sons of North and South were spilling their blood, a deep despair took possession of many people. The nation seemed to them as a ship with her sails torn, her rudder lost, drifting at the mercy of the tempestuous sea. Whittier came in this dark hour with his brave words:

"But, courage, O ye mariners!
Ye shall not suffer wreck,
While up to God the freedman's prayers
Are rising from your deck.

Wait cheerily then, O mariners,
For daylight and for land;
The breath of God is in your sail,
Your rudder in His hand."

Much of the pessimism of our day may be traced to the loss of faith in a divine Providence which cares for man as for the lily. We have given so much attention to natural law that we have come to think of it as supreme rather than as God's way of doing things. Natural law has become a very God to many men rather than a wonderful manifestation of the divine Will. We come to feel that, rather than children of the heavenly Father, we are prisoners in a great machine from which there is no way of escape. But the Quaker poet could not believe that this was a cold and lifeless world, abandoned to fate.

"Nothing can of chance befall:
Child and Seraph, mote and star,
Well Thou knowest what we are!
Through Thy vast creative plan
Looking, from the worm to man,
There is pity in Thine eyes,

But no hatred nor surprise.
Not in blind caprice of will,
Not in cunning sleight of skill,
Not for show of power, was wrought
Nature's marvel in Thy thought.
Never careless hand and vain
Smites these chords of joy and pain;
No immortal selfishness
Plays the game of curse and bless:
Heaven and earth are witnesses
That Thy glory goodness is."

Only a soul with a large outlook upon life and destiny can persevere in great works of love for the uplifting of humanity. The forces of evil are so strongly organized, the very material with which we labor is so imperfect, that defeat is sure to follow defeat. No man in the service of humanity has ever met with constant success. Those who have persevered under these circumstances have been conscious of the larger service in which they were engaged and of the co-operation which they had from higher powers. When John Bright stood up in the House of Commons he began his

address with these words: "Let us examine the laws and principles under which alone God has permitted nations to become great." Charles Sumner speaking in Congress said: "I desire to speak about certain laws older than the Constitution, older than the Declaration of Independence, older than the Vedas. I mean the laws of Almighty God." Oliver Cromwell, Gladstone, and Lincoln labored in the faith that God was on the side of right and that the final triumph of right was assured. Defeat was only temporary. So long as God is in His heavens all is right with the world. This same faith filled Whittier with hope and enabled him to work even though darkness was round about him.

"I have not seen, I may not see,
My hopes for man take form in fact,
But God will give the victory
In due time; in that faith I act.
And he who sees the future sure,
The baffling present may endure,
And bless, meanwhile, the unseen Hand that leads
The heart's desire beyond the halting step of deeds."

RELIGION AND HUMANITY

CLOSELY related to Whittier's thought of the love of God is that of the love of man. Along the pathway of these two principles his thought traveled and by them his life was guided. Late in his life he wrote: "More and more the world is learning that the true plan of salvation is love of God and love to man." In a letter to Oliver Wendell Holmes he said, "Love is the one essential thing."

He labored not for fame nor to gain a place among the immortals, but for the benefit of the world about him. In a letter written to Lucy Hooper, in which he was urging her to write a poem of some length, speaking of the time which would be required to write it he said: "We shall perish and verily our works

shall follow us. The hearts which now know us and love us will also soon cease to beat and with them our very memories will die. The utilitarian of the twentieth century will not heed whether, in treading on our graves, he shakes the dust of prose or poetry from his feet. And after all what matters it? Who cares for the opinions of the twentieth century? Not I, for one; but we do all care for the opinions of the good and the wise and the pure-hearted around us! If we strive for fame, or riches, or honor, it is because we wish to share their smile with the friends whom we love, and in the matter of poetry, a poetical reputation." A few days later he wrote her again urging her to write a poem of some length before she published her shorter poems, but he added these words of advice which he hoped she would consider before she undertook such a task: "Unless consecrated to the sacred interests of religion and humanity, it would

be a criminal waste of life and abuse of the powers which God has given for his own glory and the welfare of the world." In this way Whittier would have regarded his own life had he spent it in any other way than for the advancement of the human race. The cause of his life was the cause of his fallen brother, and to break the shackles that bound him and remove the snares that awaited him was the purpose of all his labors. So well did he live in accord with his purpose that he might have taken these words for his own:

> "Hand of want or soul in pain
> Have not sought my door in vain;
> I have kept my fealty good
> To the human brotherhood;
> Scarcely have I asked in prayer
> That which others might not share."

His long fight against slavery, his ninety-two anti-slavery poems, his espousal of the cause of the oppressed in Italy and elsewhere, all testify to the principle

which ruled his life. There are many things which show the sympathy and love which guided him. In a letter to Elizabeth Stuart Phelps, he wrote: "I love Beecher and believe in him. He has done good to thousands. If he has fallen into temptation I shall feel grieved, but would be ashamed of myself were I less his friend!" The members of the Society of Friends were troubled when they found themselves in the midst of war. He addressed these words to them: "Our mission is at this time to mitigate the sufferings of our countrymen, to visit and aid the sick and the wounded, to relieve the necessities of the widow and the orphan, and to practise economy for the sake of charity."

Whittier's greatest work was his emphasis upon the human side of Christianity. Oliver Wendell Holmes believed that theology had become chiefly *diabology* and he worked with pen and tongue to humanize religious thought.

In "The Professor at the Breakfast Table" he wrote: "By Jove, Sir, until common sense is well mixed up with medicine, and common manhood with theology, and common honesty with law, We, the People, Sir, some of us with nut crackers, some of us with trip hammers, and some of us with pile drivers, and some of us coming with a whish! like air stones out of a lunar volcano, will crash down upon lumps of nonsense in all of them till we have made powder with them like Aaron's calf."

What Holmes proposed to do, Whittier did, at least in the realm of religion. He made men understand that they could show their love for God only by acting in love toward men. If the pulpits were dumb on the great theme of human slavery, and Christianity had degenerated into mere pietism, he made the dumb clergy ashamed of their silence and never tired of telling men that apart from the cup of cold water given to the

least of earth's children there could be no Christianity.

A northern merchant in order to conciliate his Southern customers had an edition of the Prayer Book printed with certain portions, which were obnoxious to the South, omitted. Before these books, Whittier says, "sleek oppressors kneel to pray." These men imagine that heaven is moved by flattering tongues, that in the scales of Eternal Justice, selfish prayers weigh more than generous deeds, that "words intoned with graceful unction move the Eternal Goodness more than lives of truth and love." By them the Lord, again, is crucified, Eternal Goodness is clipped and shorn, his robe of mercy is rent. The cry of the bondman is "prayer-smothered," "anthem-drowned."

"No falser idol man has bowed before,
In Indian groves or islands of the sea,
Than that which through the quaint-carved Gothic door
Looks forth,—a church without humanity."

Whittier saw a priesthood which had lost its vision and had ceased to cry "Holy, Holy, Holy!" They waited for the beck and nod of power; with solemn words they sanctified the fraud; with ghostly lips they blessed the manacles and whips of slavery. "Not on them the poor rely, not to them looks liberty." What cant they proclaimed! "Golden streets for idle knaves, sabbath rest for weary slave." What a substitute for the message of the Nazarene, this life of future bliss painted on the black and hopeless present!

> "Not for words and works like these,
> Priest of God, thy mission is;
> But to make earth's desert glad,
> In its Eden greenness clad;
> And to level manhood bring
> Lord and peasant, serf and king;
> And the Christ of God to find
> In the humblest of thy kind."

Religion is always in danger of degenerating into quackery. As the solemn assembly, the noise of song and the

melody of viol satisfied the religious conscience of a corrupt Jewish nation, when Amos spoke at Bethel, so a false piety is always in danger of robbing religion of its moral quality. But forms of worship and confessions of faith, apart from the Christian virtues, were nothing to this simple Quaker. Of Doctor Neall, a philanthropist and abolitionist, brave, gentle, and tender, he wrote:

"He blew no trumpet in the market place,
Nor in the Church with hypocritic face
Supplied with cant the lack of Christian grace;
Loathing pretense, he did with cheerful will
What others talked of while their hands were still;
And, while 'Lord, Lord!' the pious tyrant cried,
Who, in the poor, their Master crucified,
His daily prayer, far better understood
In acts than words, was simply doing good."

We forget the meek and retiring Whittier and can picture in imagination none other than a giant with a voice of thunder when we read "The Christian Slave," intense with emotion, bitter with irony, and piercing in intellectual keenness. A

Southern newspaper gave a description of the auction of a slave girl. On the platform she was recommended as a "good Christian." Whittier catches the words of the auctioneer:

"A Christian! going, gone!
Who bids for God's own image? for his grace
Which that poor victim of the market-place,
Hath in her suffering won?

My God! can such things be?
Hast Thou not said that whatso'er is done
Unto Thy weakest and Thy humblest one
Is even done to Thee?

In that sad victim, then,
Child of Thy pitying love, I see Thee stand;
Once more the jest-word of a mocking band,
Bound, sold, and scourged again!"

He was as strong in his condemnation of certain phases of the commercial spirit in New England as he was in his condemnation of the church when it failed in its duty. Men, as in every great reform, said, "Don't interfere; it will affect trade. The market will become unstable and prices will drop." Party

men said, "Stand by the party." But Whittier cried, when the call was given for a meeting of citizens in Faneuil Hall:

"Up, and tread beneath your feet
Every cord by party spun:
Let your hearts together beat
As the hearts of one.
Banks and tariffs, stocks and trade,
Let them rise or let them fall:
Freedom asks your common aid,—
Up, to Faneuil Hall."

When he heard of the rejection of the Anti-slavery Resolves by the Whig Convention in Faneuil Hall in 1846 he wrote:

"Tell me not of banks and tariffs, cease your paltry pedler cries;
Shall the good State sink her honor that your gambling stocks may rise?
—Would you barter man for cotton? That your gains may sum up higher,
Must we kiss the feet of Moloch, pass our children through the fire?
Is the dollar only real? God and truth and right a dream?
Weighed against your lying ledgers must our manhood kick the beam?

O my God! for that free spirit, which of old in Boston town
Smote the Province House with terror, struck the crest of Andros down!
For another strong-voiced Adams in the streets to cry,
'Up for God and Massachusetts! Set your feet on mammon's lie!
Perish banks and perish traffic, spin your cotton's latest pound,
But in heaven's name keep your honor, keep the heart o' the Bay State sound!'"

After the War of the Rebellion had closed the greatest question before the thirty-ninth Congress was that of reconstruction, and especially the question of the standing of those who had taken arms against the Union and their relation to the freedmen. Whittier addressed a poem to the Congress which is a forceful plea for the manifestation of Christian love, and reveals in every stanza the beautiful spirit of the poet.

"The torch of vengeance in your hands
He quenches; unto Him belong
The solemn recompense of wrongs.

Alas! no victor's pride is ours;
We bend above our triumphs won
Like David o'er his rebel son."

The breadth of his sympathy is indicated by his attitude toward men of other sects than his own. As we have seen, he was an orthodox Quaker, but he was quick to recognize a Christian wherever he saw him, whether in the ranks of unitarians or trinitarians. The life which a man lived, not the creed to which he subscribed, was to this Quaker the measure of a Christian. He read a poem at the anniversary of the Friend's school in Providence in which he eulogized the great work which the Quakers had accomplished, and then adds:

"Enough and too much of the sect and the name.
What matters our label, so truth be our aim?
The creed may be wrong, but the life may be true,
And hearts beat the same under drab coats or blue."

In a poem read at Brown University the same thought is expressed:

"So love of God and man wax stronger,
Let sect and creed be lesser.

And slowly learns the world the truth
That makes us all thy debtor,—
That holy life is more than rite,
And spirit more than letter;

That they who differ pole-wide serve
Perchance the common Master,
And other sheep He hath than they
Who graze one narrow pasture!"

Whittier was a strong advocate of universal peace. War is the fruit of human selfishness and greed and it could have no place in his thought which was so dominated by love. In 1873 in his "Christmas Carmen" he wrote:

"Sing the bridal of nations! with chorals of love
Sing out the war-vulture and sing in the dove,
Till the hearts of the people keep time in accord,
And the voice of the world is the voice of the Lord!
Clasp hands of the nations
In strong gratulations:
The dark night is ending and dawn has begun;
Rise, hope of the ages, rise like the sun,
All speech flow to music, all hearts beat as one!
Blow, bugles of battle, the marches of peace;

East, west, north, and south let the long quarrel cease:
Sing the song of great joy that the angels began,
Sing of glory to God and of good-will to man!
Hark! joining in chorus
The heavens bend o'er us!
The dark night is ending and dawn has begun;
Rise, hope of the ages, arise like the sun,
All speech flow to music, all hearts beat as one!"

He also raised a protest against the cruel practice of heresy trials. Our Puritan fathers made the mistake of regarding man chiefly as an intellectual being, and religion as a philosophical system of thought to which men must give assent to obtain salvation. They forgot that man had affections, and imagination, and will, and that he gained more knowledge through these faculties of his soul than through his logical reason. They could not conceive of religion as a life but only as a dogma which was to gain the assent of man's intellect. To dissent, therefore, from the accepted theological dogmas was heresy, and heresy was one of the greatest human sins, indeed it was very

anti-Christ, because it shook the foundations of man's hope in eternal life. But Whittier had a larger conception of the nature of religion than had the Puritan. Religion is a life to be lived rather than a dogma to be believed. Love is greater than knowledge and therefore it is more Christ-like to bear with the heretic than it is to persecute him. In "The Vision of Echard" he makes God say:

"I loathe your wrangling councils,
I tread upon your creeds;
Who made ye mine avengers,
Or told ye of my needs;

I bless men and ye curse them,
I love them and ye hate;
Ye bite and tear each other,
I suffer long and wait."

Indeed who is the heretic?

"Call him not heretic whose words attest
His faith in goodness by no creed confessed.
Whatever in love's name is truly done
To free the bound and lift the fallen one
Is done to Christ. Whoso in deed and word
Is not against Him labors for our Lord.
When He, who, sad and weary, longing sore

For love's sweet service, sought the sisters' door,
One saw the heavenly, one the human guest,
But who shall say which loved the Master best?"

Faith is too often made a matter of intellectual assent to a creed but this is not faith at all. Faith is trust in the God who is good, and trust that brings us into such vital relation with Him that we manifest His goodness in our lives.

"We live by Faith; but Faith is not the slave
Of text and legend. Reason's voice and God's,
Nature's and Duty's, never are at odds.
What asks our Father of His children, save
Justice and mercy and humility,
A reasonable service of good deeds,
Pure living, tenderness of human needs,
Reverence and truth, and prayer for light to see
The Master's footprints in our daily ways?
No knotted scourge nor sacrificial knife,
But the calm beauty of an ordered life
Whose very breathing is unworded praise!—
A life that stands as all true lives have stood,
Firm-rooted in the faith that God is Good."

Closely connected with the thought of love is Whittier's thought of worship. While so plain, so devoid of everything which would appeal to the eye or the

ear, his conception is beautiful. It is the thought expressed by St. James: "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and the widows in their affliction and to keep himself unspotted from the world." When these words are rightly understood they embody Whittier's thought of worship. They mean pure worship rather than pure religion. The word "religion" in the seventeenth century meant mainly "outward service," or what we sometimes express in the words "religious service and worship." Religion then was mainly ritual of ceremonies and ablutions, but the true ritual, says St. James, is purity, love, and service.

"He asks no taper lights on high, surrounding
The priestly altar and the saintly grave,
No dolorous chants nor organ music sounding
Nor incense clouding up the twilight nave.

O brother man! fold to thy heart thy brother;
Where pity dwells, the peace of God is there:

To worship rightly is to love each other,
Each smile a hymn, each kindly deed a prayer."

The same thought is found in "Our Master:"

"He serves the best who loveth most
His brothers and thy own,
Thy litanies, sweet offices
Of love and gratitude;
Thy sacramental liturgies
The joy of doing good."

In "The Over-Heart" he writes:

"What doth the holy guide require?
No rite of pain, nor gift of blood,
But man a kindly brotherhood.
Looking, where duty is desire,
To Him, the beautiful and good."

In love and service is to be found the highest worship.

"For he who sings the love of man
The love of God hath sung."

NATURE

RICHARD HENRY STODDARD, writing of Whittier's poems on Nature, marks them as "characterized by poetic elements which are not common among descriptive poets. They are not enumerative like the landscapes that form the backgrounds of Scott's metrical romances, but suggestive; for though there is an abundance of form and color in them, their value does not depend upon these qualities so much as upon the luminous atmosphere in which they are steeped. They are more than picturesque in that they reveal the personality of the poet, a personality that, changing with the moods they awaken, is always tender and thoughtful, grateful for the glimpses of loveliness they disclose, and consoled by the spiritual truth they teach."

Whittier was not a Greek in spirit. He did not love nature for its simple beauty of form and color. The thing of supreme interest to him was life and he was attracted to nature because it helped him to interpret himself, his brother, and his God. Nature was dwarfed to insignificance before a human soul. The poet visited a farm and heard the bleating of sheep among the hills, the old bucket splashing in the well, the clatter of the pasture-bars as they fell, the creaking of the barn-yard gate as the children upon it swung back and forth, the clear tinkling of the cow bell as the evening brought in the herd from the pasture. The scene broadened until he saw the "lake tinted with sunset," "the wavy lines of the receding hills," and still farther away

"Monadnock lifting from his night of pines
His rosy forehead to the evening star.
Beside us, purple-zoned, Wachuset laid
His head against the West, whose warm light
made

His aureole; and o'er him, sharp and clear,
Like a shaft of lightening in mid-launching stayed,
A single level cloud-line, shone upon
By the fierce glances of the sunken sun,
Menaced the darkness with its golden spear!"

Truly this is a picture which would make a Greek of any man! What more could man desire? But as Whittier looks on this picture, so beautiful, the farmer, walking by his side, speaks of his sainted mother, and immediately Whittier sees something still more beautiful than this nature-picture.

"The warm sky, the sundown-tinted hill,
The forest and the lake, seemed dwarfed and dim
Before the saintly soul, whose human will
Meekly in the Eternal footsteps trod,
Making her homely toil and household ways
An earthly echo of the song of praise
Swelling from angel lips and harps of seraphim."

It was because Whittier saw all nature in terms of life that his nature poetry differs from that of any other descriptive poet. He was not a philosophical interpreter of nature as was Wordsworth but

nature was constantly interpreting for him the great realities of life. Nature always spoke to him on those great themes of love, immortality, and God. It was always making clear to him some human emotion, or hope, or fear. It is true that at times he delighted to go into the presence of nature and forget "the dusty land and noisy town." He often went into the forests or to the sea shore, and let nature's calm pour into his soul. At Hampton Beach he said:

"Good-by to Pain and Care! I take
Mine ease to-day:
Here where these sunny waters break,
And ripples this keen breeze, I shake
All burdens from the heart, all weary thoughts away.

I draw a freer breath, I seem
Like all I see
Waves in the sun, the white-winged gleam
Of sea-birds in the slanting beam,
And far-off sails which flit before the south-wind free."

But he found this rest and peace in nature because all nature had for him a

deep, sacred significance. It was more than sticks, and rocks, and clods, and flowers, and hills. It was the garment of Spirit ever present in man and things. It was a symbol of spiritual facts which enabled him to hear in nature a living voice.

The religious significance of Whittier's nature poetry is found in three uses which he makes of nature. First, he finds in nature a text for his sermon; second, nature gives him the opportunity for "thoughtful hours of musing;" and finally, nature has a deeper spiritual significance which speaks of God.

Whittier was a natural preacher and he could not resist the temptation to preach. Tennyson was seldom if ever a preacher. He always had a moral view in his writings. He did not write for art's sake alone. The substance of his message was as important as its form. But he never used his material as does the preacher. The story of life which he

related, or the picture of nature which he drew, was so clear that the moral truth was always felt. He never attached a moral to the end of his writings. Whittier, on the other hand, was not satisfied to draw a picture and let it teach its own lesson. To him the illustration was incomplete until he made the application.

He wrote of the Mayflower and the origin of its name. The Pilgrim went into the forest at the opening of spring after that first hard winter at Plymouth and finding this flower lifting its head above the leaves, named it after the ship which had brought him across the sea. The flower has come to us with the same beautiful blossom which welcomed the Pilgrim. So Whittier would have the Pilgrim's character come down to us and be repeated in our sons.

"O sacred flower of faith and hope,
As sweetly now as then
Ye bloom on many a birchen slope,
In many a pine-dark glen.

Behind the sea-wall's rugged length,
Unchanged, your leaves unfold,
Like love behind the manly strength
Of the brave hearts of old.

So like the fathers' in their sons,
Their sturdy faith be ours,
And ours the love that overruns
Its rocky strength with flowers."

He stood looking at the mountain of Franconia. The lightning was playing about its brow, the clouds were wrapping their black mantles about its sides, and the roar of thunder was echoing down its deep, dark canyons. Tongues of fire broke the great trees and the rain fell in torrents. After the storm the mists cleared, the winds paused in the pines, and the deer went forth to feed. The rain set in play a thousand waterfalls, whose laughter made the woods glad, and filling the dry streams in the valley, made them "sing to the freshened meadow-lands again." This was a picture drawn by Whittier in 1862, when an awful storm had swept over our land;

when everything was dark and sad. The blessings that followed the storm about the mountain filled him with a larger hope for the nation.

"So, let me hope, the battle-storm that beats
The land with hail and fire may pass away
With its spent thunders at the break of day,
Like last night's clouds, and leave, as it retreats,
A greener earth and fairer sky behind,
Blown crystal-clear by Freedom's Northern wind!"

In the sunset, "the miracle play of night and day," Whittier found thought for a sermon on immortality. The last rays of the summer's sun fell on the river making "a gold fringe on the purpling hem of hills." A light touched the sky and mountain filling them with a glory of which no poet has ever sung. The summit of the mountains "melt in rosy mist," and the granite rocks seem softer than the clouds. No leaf stirs. The silence of eternity has fallen over the land. The poet stands dumb before the scene. But soon it begins to fade. The

golden waters grow pale and a gray-winged mist sweeps over the valley, shutting from view the purple hills. The day is lost in the night.

"I go the common way of all;
The sunset fires will burn,
The flowers will blow, the river flow,
When I no more return.
No whisper from the mountain pine
Nor lapsing stream shall tell
The stranger, treading where I tread,
Of him who loved them well.

But beauty seen is never lost,
God's colors all are fast;
The glory of the sunset heaven
Into my soul has passed,
A sense of gladness unconfined
To mortal date or clime;
As the soul liveth, it shall live
Beyond the years of time.
Beside the mystic asphodels
Shall bloom the home-born flowers,
And new horizons flush and glow
With sunset hues of ours."

Whittier could not even contemplate a simple Christmas scene without finding in it the deeper meaning of human life. A traveler passed by his home at Christ-

mas time and saw dimly through the frosted window pane a flower. To the traveler it had no beauty because he could not see its perfect grace. It turned its face from the "frosty breath of autumn" to the warm tropic air of the room, so that only those within the home could see the real beauty of the flower.

"So from the trodden ways of earth,
Seem some sweet souls who veil their worth,
And offer to the careless glance
The clouding gray of circumstance.
They blossom best where hearth-fires burn,
To loving eyes alone they turn
The flowers of inward grace that hide
Their beauty from the world outside.

But deeper meanings come to me,
My half-immortal flower, from thee!
Man judges from a partial view,
None ever yet his brother knew;
The Eternal Eye that sees the whole
May better read the darkened soul,
And find, to outward sense denied,
The flower upon its inmost side!"

Whittier's use of nature as a text for a sermon was not, however, his highest

thought of nature. He tells us that he went to nature for "thoughtful hours of musing." We are fortunate in having so many poets who have lived in communion with nature. From Bryant's "Thanatopsis" to Woodberry's "North Shore Watch," our poets have gone to nature for some of their deepest and most spiritual lessons. So Whittier went into the forest and by the sea shore, not so much for the purpose of finding sermons, as to commune with nature in her various moods.

There was a lonely spot in the forest where the trailing arbutus grew. It was a place shut in by the barricade of pines. Amid dry leaves and mosses, under dead boughs, these little spring flowers lifted their heads in glad surprise. Musing on this little flower which tried to gladden the lonely dell, Whittier was led to think of lonely lives, "clogged and pent," cold and cumbered with care, which still find room

"To lend a sweetness to the ungenial day,
And make the sad earth happier for their bloom."

In the heart of winter he found things which were prophecies of summer. Then the winter noon seemed "warm as summer's day," the ice thawed, the mossy earth looked forth, the streams gushed clear, the fox left his cell, and the blue bird sang with the brook. All these things the poet saw and felt as the summer prophecy of winter days.

"So, in those winters of the soul,
By bitter blasts and drear
O'erswept from Memory's frozen pole,
Will sunny days appear.
Reviving Hope and Faith, they show
The soul its living powers,
And how beneath the winter's snow
Lie germs of summer flowers!

The Night is mother of the Day,
The Winter of the Spring,
And ever upon old Decay
The greenest mosses cling.
Behind the cloud the starlight lurks,
Through showers the sunbeams fall;
For God, who loveth all His works,
Has left His hope with all."

As he went into the fields and the gentle west wind fell upon his cheek, and he saw the fair meadows kept green by the constant streams, the cool, blue mountains rising in the distance, the moist dells where the purple orchis blooms, he found a prophecy of the land which is to bring rest to every soul and cool every pilgrim's brow:

"So the o'erwearied pilgrim, as he fares
Along life's summer waste, at times is fanned,
Even at noontide, by the cool, sweet airs
Of a serener and a holier land,
Fresh as the morn, and as the dewfall bland.
Breath of the blessed Heaven for which we pray,
Blow from the eternal hills! make glad our earthly way!"

In the spring time he found the type of the resurrection. He saw in it the yearly evangel from God, bearing his glad message of life over the grave.

"O soul of the spring-time, its light and its breath,
Bring warmth to this coldness, bring life to this death;
Renew the great miracle; let us behold
The stone from the mouth of the sepulchre rolled,

And Nature, like Lazarus, rise, as of old !
Let our faith, which in darkness and coldness has
lain,
Revive with the warmth and the brightness again,
And in blooming of flower and budding of tree
The symbols and types of our destiny see;
The life of the spring-time, the life of the whole,
And, as sun to the sleeping earth, love to the soul !"

If nature spoke such a varied language to Whittier it was because he saw the "Giver in the given." To him nature's phases were "God's great pictures," and in contemplating the picture he never forgot the Artist. Thus when he went to the hills he saw them crowned with "unseen altars," when he walked through the fields he was conscious that a "Presence from the heavenly heights to those of earth stoops down." By the side of Lake Winnipesaukee, looking in the "dark, still wood," and "upon the stiller sea and greener land," he found rest for his spirit. Here even conscience slumbered, the voice of duty was still, the shadows of life melted away. But this

restful spirit came because nature was the voice of the Inner Light which spoke peace to the soul.

"Rocked on her breast, these pines and I
Alike on Nature's love rely;
And equal seems to live or die.

Assured that He whose presence fills
With light the spaces of these hills
No evil to His creatures wills,

The simple faith remains, that He
Will do, whatever that may be,
The best alike for man and tree.

What mosses over one shall grow,
What life and light the other know,
Unanxious, leaving Him to show."

The quiet lake is the "mirror of God's love," and while sitting by it with its wooded isles, beholding the sun setting behind its purple mountains, Whittier felt a calm repose stealing into his life of suffering, which led him to rest in faith on the divine Goodness.

"Still waits kind Nature to impart
Her choicest gifts to such as gain
An entrance to her loving heart
Through the sharp discipline of pain.

Forever from the hand that takes
One blessing from us, others fall ;
And, soon or late, our Father makes
His perfect recompense to all ! "

The Indian wandering in the forest looked out "upon the smile of God." He found in nature the great Spirit. He knew not the language of the skeptic, but, in the simplicity of his life, he felt a Power which carried conviction to his soul. As the primitive mind found in the wind, the sunset, and the tranquil deep, an ever-present spirit, so there Whittier found his ever-present God.

" God near him seemed ; from earth and skies
His loving voice he heard,
As, face to face, in Paradise,
Man stood before the Lord.

Thanks, O our Father ! that, like him,
Thy tender love I see,
In radiant hill and woodland dim,
And tinted sunset sea.
For not in mockery dost Thou fill
Our earth with light and grace ;
Thou hid'st no dark and cruel will
Behind Thy smiling face ! "

Whittier seems to sum up his entire conception of nature in the poem entitled "The Meeting:"

> "But nature is not solitude:
> She crowds us with her thronging wood;
> Her many hands reach out to us,
> Her many tongues are garrulous;
> Perpetual riddles of surprise
> She offers to our ears and eyes;
> She will not leave our senses still,
> But drags them captive at her will:
> And, making earth too great for heaven,
> She hides the Giver in the given."

Nature was a "perpetual riddle of surprise" because it was more than form and beauty. It was steeped in a spiritual atmosphere which gave to it meaning and was the reason for its constant appeal to human thought and sentiment.

As man understands man because of kindred spirit, so man understands and communes with nature because there is in nature a spirit like his own.

Some may feel the necessity of kneeling before saintly shrines and breathing the air of holy places. "Cowled and tur-

baned pilgrims" may bathe in sacred rivers. Whittier, too, felt the necessity of going to a holy place for worship to lose his cares and ills, but he preferred to go to "the strong uplifting hills" and there,

"Calm as the hour, methinks I feel
A sense of worship o'er me steal;
Not that of satyr-charming Pan,
No cult to Nature shaming man,
Not Beauty's self, but that which lives
And shines through all the veils it weaves,—
Soul of the mountain, lake, and wood,
Their witness to the Eternal Good!"

FUTURE LIFE

WHITTIER was not one who would say, if there is no heaven then life is not worth living. He, probably, would not have been a pessimist had he believed that death ended all. Man might find many things which would fill him with regret as he looked upon a misspent past. There might be much to make him feel that he had been a poor, blind, miserable servant. Yet

> "If he hath hidden the outcast, or let in
> A ray of sunshine to the cell of sin;
> If he hath lent
> Strength to the weak, and, in an hour of need,
> Over the suffering, mindless of his creed
> Or home, hath bent;
> He hath not lived in vain."

Such a life is ample reward in itself. Still Whittier did have a strong faith in the immortality of the soul. "The little

circumstance of death," he wrote, "will make no difference with me." After the death of his sister, who had been his constant companion and great helper, he wrote in "Snow-Bound:"

> "I cannot feel that thou art far
> Since near at hand the angels are;
> And when the sunset gates unbar,
> Shall I not see thee waiting stand,
> And, white against the evening star,
> The welcome of thy beckoning hand?"

The same hope is expressed in another part of the poem:

> "Yet love will dream and faith will trust,
> (Since He who knows our needs is just),
> That somehow, somewhere, meet we must.
> Alas for him who never sees
> The stars shine through his cypress trees!
> Who, hopeless lays his dead away,
> Nor looks to see the breaking day
> Across the mournful marbles play!
> Who hath not learned, in hours of faith,
> The truth to flesh and sense unknown,
> That Life is ever Lord of Death,
> And Love can never lose its own."

Whittier had no vague, indefinite faith in the future life. He expected to re-

tain his individuality in the next life so that he might be recognized by his friends and recognize them. "I shall have the same loves, and aspirations, and occupations. If it were not so I should not be myself, and surely I shall not lose my identity."

The thought of annihilation was intolerable to him. There are at least two forms of this doctrine. One teaches that man is a spark from the central light, and that death is simply the return of the spark into the great flame. Or to use a more familiar figure, the soul is like a drop of water out of the great ocean of spirit, and death is the return of the drop into the limitless expanse. The other form of this doctrine has nothing to say about the origin of the soul. It speaks only of its destiny, declaring that death ends all. Whichever form we consider, the end is the same, the destruction of personality. Whittier could not believe such a doctrine. Nothing less

than the survival of personality, so that it might be recognized in the future state, could satisfy his faith.

"Nor mine the hope of Indra's son,
Of slumbering in oblivious rest,
Life's myriads blending into one,
In blank annihilation blest;
Dust-atoms of the infinite,
Sparks scattered from the central light,
And winning back through mortal pain
Their old unconsciousness again.
No! I have friends in Spirit Land,
Not shadows in a shadowy band,
Not others, but themselves are they."

He could not think that the noblest work of God would be destroyed while material things remain forever. There is the law of the conservation of energy and the indestructibility of matter. Surely there must be a spiritual law which will assure the indestructibility of personality. We cannot think that God cares more for physical force and material atoms than he does for spiritual beings.

"The waves which lull thy body's rest,
The dust thy pilgrim footsteps trod,
Unwasted, through each change, attest
The fixed economy of God.

Shall these poor elements outlive
The mind whose kingly will they wrought?
Their gross unconsciousness survive
Thy godlike energy of thought?"

While Whittier speaks these assuring words concerning the immortal life, we must not conclude that he accepted this truth as an intellectual certainty. We have seen that his supreme trust in the goodness of God was an act of his religious nature rather than a proposition accepted by his reason. His faith in immortality was a reasonable hope rather than a certainty of the intellect. He found nothing outside of his religious nature which strengthened his faith in the continuance of life after death. At a meeting of the Radical Club, Robert Dale Owen related many of his experiences of spirit manifestations and then asked Whittier, "What would you do

if you should see such things?" "I would cut and run," said Whittier. Such things added nothing to his faith. With Mrs. Child he discussed these things.

"Of many a hint of life beyond the veil,
And many a ghostly tale
Wherewith the ages spanned the gulf between
The seen and the unseen,
Seeking from omen, trance, and dream to gain
Solace to doubtful pain,
And touch with groping hands, the garment hem
Of truth sufficing them,
We talked."

But these conversations, even with a woman whom he so much admired, did not strengthen his faith. To him life was its own best testimony to immortality. That, in the divine economy, any life of love, and truth, and self-sacrifice could finally be lost, was a thing which he found himself unable to believe.

"Turning from the sore unrest
Of an all-baffling quest,
We thought of holy lives that from us passed
Hopeful unto the last,

As if they saw beyond the river of death,
Like Him of Nazareth,
The many mansions of the Eternal days
Lift up their gates of praise.

And hushed to silence by a reverent awe,
Methought, O friend, I saw
In thy true life of word, and work, and thought,
The proof of all we sought."

Often Whittier's heart and head, his faith and reason, came into conflict. When reason was in the ascendency, he was in confusion about the future life. When faith was in the ascendency, he rested serenely in the hope of immortality. When he tried to picture what the future life would be, the influence of the present life upon that to come, he felt the solemn mystery and could speak only in the language of the agnostic. All we know is that our friends have been borne on by the returnless tide and that we too must some day be carried into the unknown.

"But be the prying vision veiled,
And let the seeking lips be dumb,

Where even seraph eyes have failed
Shall mortal blindness seek to come?

We only knew that thou hast gone,
And that the same returnless tide
Which bore thee from us still glides on,
And we who mourn thee with it glide."

Love, however, is greater than knowledge, and faith is greater than logic. When these voices of the heart are heard, the questions of the head are silenced and hope returns.

"We leave thee with a trust serene,
Which Time, nor Change, nor Death can move,
While with a childlike faith we lean
On Him whose dearest name is Love!"

He was constantly emphasizing the thought that the immortal life does not begin beyond the grave but is now. Death is only an incident, not a change, in the process of life. Man divides time into the past, the present, and the future, and between the present and the future there is a thick veil drawn, beyond which no eye can look. But with God there are

no such divisions, there is no veil which divides one time from another.

> "What to thee is shadow, to Him is day
> And the end He knoweth,
> And not on a blind and aimless way
> The spirit goeth."

So to the soul that believes in God, there is no division of time into the present and the future life. "The past and the time to be are one, and both are now." To the believing soul the immortal life is lived on the earth. The future life is a present fact and heaven and hell are present realities.

> "O restless spirit! wherefore strain
> Beyond thy sphere?
> Heaven and hell, with their joy and pain,
> Are now and here.
>
> Back to thyself is measured well
> All thou hast given;
> Thy neighbor's wrong is thy present hell,
> His bliss thy heaven.
>
> And in life, in death, in dark and light,
> All are in God's care:
> Sound the black abyss, pierce the deep night,
> And He is there."

Emphasizing the goodness of God as did Whittier, we might expect that he would have a very large hope for the future life. He did not believe that death closed to man all possibilities of turning to God; neither did he believe that all men would finally be brought to God. The first of these thoughts is found in "The Cry of a Lost Soul." On the Amazon is a bird which has a peculiar cry; the Indians call it the cry of a lost soul. A guide rowing a traveler on this river hears the cry and describes it as the cry of some infidel or heretic, coming from hell. Some soul has sinned unto death so that the "Holy Mother hath no prayer for him." The traveler listens to the story, meditates for a moment, and then comes to him a larger hope.

"'Father of all!' he urges his strong plea,
'Thou lovest all: Thy erring child may be
Lost to himself, but never lost to Thee!
All souls are Thine; the wings of morning bear
None from that Presence which is everywhere,

Nor hell itself can hide, for Thou art there.
Wilt thou not make, Eternal Source and Goal!
In Thy long years, life's broken circle whole,
And change to praise the cry of a lost soul?'"

Expressing the same thought in "Eternal Goodness," he says:

> "I only know I cannot drift
> Beyond His love and care."

This large hope for the race which Whittier held led some to the conclusion that he was a Universalist. In reply to this he wrote to a friend: "I am not a Universalist, for I believe in the possibility of the perpetual loss of the soul that persistently turns away from God, in the next life as in this. But I do believe that the divine love and compassion follows us in all worlds and the Heavenly Father will do the best that is possible for every creature He has made."

When he turned from the godward to the manward side of the question his hope was not so bright; indeed here he knew not what to think.

"Scarcely Hope hath shaped for me
What the future life may be.
Other lips may well be bold;
Like the publican of old,
I can only urge the plea,
Lord, be merciful to me!"

God will never desert a soul, but man may turn from God and remain away from Him. "Thou leavest us because we turn from Thee."

"Though God be good and free be heaven,
No force divine can love compel;
And, though the songs of sin forgiven
May sound through lowest hell,

The sweet persuasion of His voice
Respects thy sanctity of will.
* * * * *
Forever round the Mercy-seat
The guiding lights of love shall burn,
But what if habit bound, thy feet
Shall lack the will to turn?

What if thine eyes refuse to see,
Thine ear of Heaven's free welcome fail,
And thou a willing captive be,
Thyself thy own dark jail?"

As the present life is a part of the eternal life, our conduct here must influ-

ence our future destiny. We shape here the character of the life to come; by our present conduct we "fill our future's atmosphere with sunshine or with shade."

"The tissue of the life to be
We weave with colors all our own,
And in the field of Destiny
We reap as we have sown.

Still shall the soul around it call
The shadows which it gathered here,
And painted on the eternal wall,
The Past shall reappear.

Think ye the notes of holy song
On Milton's tuneful ear have died?
Think ye that Raphael's angel throng
Has vanished from his side?

Oh no! We live our life again;
Or warmly touched, or coldly dim,
The pictures of the Past remain,—
Man's works shall follow him!"

Still, if the future world were divided into two distinct realms, if there were a separation between the good and the bad, between the obedient and the disobedient, Whittier could not believe that it would be impossible to pass from one

to the other. So long as sin remains and souls dwell in darkness, heaven could not be heaven and "look unmoved on hell." A peace with a selfish unconcern about those writhing in the pain of remorse, a saintly ease which has no pitying care, a love which has no prayer for the sinner's forgiveness, can be no part of the heavenly life.

"Is heaven so high
That pity cannot breathe its air?
Its happy eyes forever dry,
Its holy lips without a prayer!
My God! my God! if thither led
By thy free grace unmerited,
No crown nor palm be mine, but let me keep
A heart that still can feel, and eyes that still can weep."

The same thought is further developed in "The Two Angels." God called two angels, one was Pity and the other was Love, and sent them on an errand of mercy into the under world. A wail of sin and woe came through the gates of heaven and saddened those within. The smoke of torment darkened heaven's

bright light. The divine compassion could not rest satisfied with such sights and sent the angels with this command:

"Fly downward to that under world and on its souls of pain
Let Love drop smiles like sunshine, and Pity tears like rain!"

Swiftly they made their flight through the long, strange way until they came to the "lost and nether world, red-wrapped in rayless flame."

"There Pity, shuddering, wept; but Love with faith too strong for fear,
Took heart from God's almightiness and smiled a smile of cheer.

And lo! that tear of Pity quenched the flame whereon it fell,
And, with the sunshine of that smile, hope entered into hell!"

Not only did this act bring hope into hell; it also brought joy into heaven. The Father said to the returning angels;

"Welcome, my angels! ye have brought a holier joy to heaven;
Henceforth its sweetest song shall be the song of sin forgiven!"

With this calm, peaceful faith in the future life, and childlike trust in the Eternal Goodness, Whittier closed his life on the seventh of September, 1892. As the end approached one of the little group of relatives who stood by his bedside recited his poem "At Last:"

"When on my day of life the night is falling,
And, in the winds from unsunned spaces blown,
I hear voices out of darkness calling
My feet to paths unknown,

Thou who hast made my home of life so pleasant,
Leave not its tenant when its walls decay;
O Love Divine, O Helper ever present,
Be thou my strength and stay!

Be near me when all else is from me drifting;
Earth, sky, home's pictures, days of shade and shine,
And kindly faces to my own uplifting
The love which answers mine.

I have but Thee, my Father! let Thy spirit
Be with me then to comfort and uphold;
No gate of pearl, no branch of palm I merit,
Nor street of shining gold.

Suffice it if—my good and ill unreckoned,
And both forgiven through Thy abounding grace—
I find myself by hands familiar beckoned
Unto my fitting place.

Some humble door among Thy many mansions,
Some sheltering shade where sin and striving cease,
And flows forever through heaven's green expansions
The river of Thy peace.

There, from the music round about me stealing,
I fain would learn the new and holy song,
And find at last, beneath Thy trees of healing,
The life for which I long."

GENERAL LIBRARY
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA—BERKELEY

RETURN TO DESK FROM WHICH BORROWED

This book is due on the last date stamped below, or on the date to which renewed.
Renewed books are subject to immediate recall.

LIBRARY USE
NOV 14 1954
NOV 14 1954 LD
28Apr58 MF
REC'D LD
APR 30 1958
Oct'58HK
REC'D LD
SEP 28 1958
28Feb'59RH
REC'D LD
16Oct'59CT
REC'D LD
OCT 13 1959
3Dec'59MH
Madelyn Sears
JAN 3 1960
REC'D LD
DEC 17 1959
3Aug'62RH
REC'D LD
JUL 26 1962
22Jan'65GH
FEB 1 - '65 5 PM
MAR - 1 1967 4 1
RECEIVED
FEB 28 '67 6 PM
LOAN DEPT.

21-100m-1,'54(1887s16)476